5   **VIRTUAL PRIVATE NETWORK HAVING AUTOMATIC REACHABILITY UPDATING**

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A unified policy management system for an organization
including a central policy server and remotely situated policy
10   enforcers. A central database and policy enforcer databases
storing policy settings are configured as LDAP databases adhering
to a hierarchical object oriented structure. Such structure
allows the policy settings to be defined in an intuitive and
extensible fashion. Changes in the policy settings made at the
15   central policy server are automatically transferred to the policy
enforcers for updating their respective databases. Each policy
enforcer collects and transmits health and status information in
a predefined log format and transmits it to the policy server for
efficient monitoring by the policy server. For further
20   efficiencies, the policy enforcement functionalities of the
policy enforcers are effectively partitioned so as to be readily
implemented in hardware. The system also provides for
dynamically routed VPNs where VPN membership lists are
automatically created and shared with the member policy
25   enforcers. Updates to such membership lists are also
automatically transferred to remote VPN clients. The system
further provides for fine grain access control of the traffic in
the VPN by allowing definition of firewall rules within the VPN.
In addition, policy server and policy enforcers may be configured
30   for high availability by maintaining a backup unit in addition
to a primary unit. The backup unit become active upon failure
of the primary unit.